

STATE'S WITNESS - DENNIS CHAPMAN - (DIRECT)

1 DENNIS CHAPMAN

2 called on behalf of the State, having been first duly
3 sworn, testified as follows:

4 DIRECT EXAMINATION

5 BY MS. BECKER:

6 Q Could you please tell us who you are?

7 A Dennis Chapman. I'm a detective with the Elkhart
8 County Sheriff's Department.

9 Q How long have you been a detective with the Elkhart
10 County Sheriff's Department, Detective Chapman?

11 A I've been a detective six years.

12 Q Okay. How long have you worked at the Elkhart
13 County Sheriff's Department?

14 A In November it will be 12 years with the sheriff's
15 department.

16 Q Prior to that, what did you do?

17 A I worked in a juvenile detention for six years in
18 Elkhart County.

19 Q Prior to that?

20 A I worked the juvenile detention in Berrien County,
21 Michigan.

22 Q Okay. And then prior to that?

23 A I was in training for the U.S. border patrol.

24 Q That's okay. We need to keep going back. What did
25 you do before the border patrol?

STATE'S WITNESS - DENNIS CHAPMAN - (DIRECT)

1 A And before that I worked as security at the Cook
2 Nuclear plant, Bridgeman, Michigan.
3 Q I'm sorry, what?
4 A I worked security at the Cook Nuclear Plant in
5 Bridgeman, Michigan.
6 Q The Cook Nuclear Plant?
7 A Right.
8 Q All right. Prior to that, that's the important
9 part, what did you do?
10 A I worked for the FBI.
11 Q What did you do for the FBI?
12 A I was a fingerprint examiner.
13 Q How long were you a fingerprint examiner for the
14 FBI?
15 A Approximately two years.
16 Q Now, not to date you, but when did you actually
17 begin your service with the FBI?
18 A It was February of 1976.
19 Q Okay. In February of 1976, was the FBI using
20 computers for fingerprint classifications?
21 A No, they were not.
22 Q Okay. When you began working for the FBI, what
23 kind of training did you have to obtain?
24 A I went through 12 weeks of training how to classify
25 and examine presents.

STATE'S WITNESS - DENNIS CHAPMAN - (DIRECT)

1 Q Okay. What do you mean by classify prints?

2 A Well, at the time, the FBI -- the whole seventh
3 floor of the FBI headquarters in Washington was
4 filled with file cabinets, and the fingerprint
5 cards were all filed in there, and they were
6 classified according to female, male, and they were
7 broken down so you could search them easily.
8 Each -- there was 26 units on that floor, and each
9 unit was broke up so it would be easier to search.
10 They were not searched by name, but they were
11 searched by classification.

12 Q All right. So for example, somebody would submit a
13 fingerprint to you and say find me the comparison.
14 What would you do?

15 A First thing you'd do would be classify the print
16 and find out which unit you would go to.

17 Q And when you say "classify," do you break a print
18 down according to the types of characteristics that
19 it shows?

20 A Right. It would be the type of patterns that were
21 in each finger.

22 Q And once you're able to break it down into those,
23 can you at least limit your search to a smaller
24 number?

25 A A smaller number, yes.

STATE'S WITNESS - DENNIS CHAPMAN - (DIRECT)

1 Q Even though you could classify a print and get it
2 down to a smaller number, how many print cards
3 would you have to look at in order to make a
4 comparison?

5 A Well, the standard was -- say, the last card you
6 would search by would be a ridge count of ten. You
7 always have to search from either five to 15, so
8 you'd have several prints, sometimes hundreds of
9 prints in one search.

10 Q Okay. And how would you actually compare?

11 A You would look at each card individually.

12 Q Okay. What kind of an instrument did you use in
13 order to look at these cards and make comparisons?

14 A We had little magnifying glasses that we look
15 through.

16 Q And how many years did you spend doing this?

17 A Two years.

18 Q All right. After you left the FBI, did you later
19 then have to use your fingerprint skills again?

20 A When I worked at Cook Plant, occasionally they
21 would ask me if these prints -- for background
22 checks on certain individuals asked me if they were
23 all right to be submitted, and I would look at
24 them.

25 Q Okay. When you came to the Elkhart County

STATE'S WITNESS - DENNIS CHAPMAN - (DIRECT)

1 Sheriff's Department and became a detective, what
2 were part of your duties?

3 A As initially, I was assigned investigations, but
4 they would also ask for me to look at prints
5 because they knew I had the fingerprint training.

6 Q Okay. Did everybody kind of come to you and say
7 can you help?

8 A Yes, they did.

9 Q All right. And based upon that, did you start
10 doing that on a more regular basis?

11 A Yeah. In the fall of 2000, I attended a Integrated
12 Indiana Law Enforcement Crime Scene Training
13 School; and after that of course, then I was
14 assigned to lab full time.

15 Q Okay. And in the lab as a full time detective
16 technician, is it one of your responsibilities to
17 examine as well compare fingerprints?

18 A Yes, it is.

19 Q Based upon your experience, have you been able to
20 make fingerprint comparisons in the past several
21 years?

22 A Yes, I have.

23 Q Any idea how many comparisons you've made?

24 A Not right off the top of my head. Several -- maybe
25 100 or so.

STATE'S WITNESS - DENNIS CHAPMAN - (DIRECT)

1 Q Okay. I'd like to show you what has been --
2 actually, before we do that. Let's talk a little
3 bit about fingerprints. Do you also have training
4 and experience in attempting to recover latent
5 prints from a crime scene?

6 A Yes.

7 Q Is that part of your responsibilities at the
8 sheriff's department?

9 A Yes, it is.

10 Q In your experience, do you often find fingerprints
11 at a crime scene?

12 A Not often.

13 Q Why not?

14 A A lot of it depends on the surface you're trying
15 fingerprint and the type of surface it is. Glass
16 is pretty easy but most other surfaces it's
17 difficult to get prints off of.

18 Q Okay. Are there certain external things that
19 effect whether a fingerprint is left or not?

20 A Yes. Weather will effect it, and the type of
21 surface; and if someone is a secretor or not if
22 they leave prints behind.

23 Q What does a secretor mean?

24 A Someone sweats a lot, or if they have -- sometimes
25 people wear gloves (unintelligible) T.V. too

STATE'S WITNESS - DENNIS CHAPMAN - (DIRECT)

1 they'll wear gloves at scenes.

2 Q Okay. And what if your hands are really clean,
3 like you've washed them?

4 A The more likely is difficult to leave sometimes.

5 Q The older that you get, does that effect the
6 quality of prints?

7 A Yes, it does.

8 Q Why?

9 A Depending on a person's career. If someone -- if
10 they work in a factory or something they get --
11 their fingerprints get worn a lot, and they get
12 scatches. Even if someone who sits in the tub --
13 we've done that for a long time, you know, your
14 fingers get wrinkly after that.

15 Q Do all of these things effect your ability to
16 recover a print?

17 A Yes, it does.

18 Q When you're looking at fingerprints and when you
19 were doing your classifications not only for the
20 FBI but when you examine them now, what kinds of
21 things do you look for?

22 A I look for types of pattern, how good the ridges
23 are. The ridges are the little lines you see on
24 your fingers.

25 Q In addition to the lines that you see, do those

STATE'S WITNESS - DENNIS CHAPMAN - (DIRECT)

1 lines have certain characteristics such as stops,
2 starts, dots, those kinds of things that are
3 important in your classifications?

4 A Yes, all those.

5 Q All right. I'd like to show you what's been marked
6 for identification purposes as State's Exhibit 47.
7 Do you recognize this?

8 A Yes, I do.

9 Q What is it?

10 A It's a fingerprint card from the Elkhart City
11 Police Department.

12 Q Did you personally use this fingerprint card to
13 attempt to make a classification or -- I'm sorry --
14 a comparison?

15 A Yes, I did.

16 Q All right. When did you do that?

17 A (unintelligible) we received these prints in August
18 29th from Joel, I believe, it's 2003.

19 Q Okay. Thank you. Next I would like to show you
20 what has been marked for identification purposes --
21 I'm sorry. It's been admitted into evidence as
22 State's Exhibit 46. Do you recognize this?

23 A Yes, I do.

24 Q What is it?

25 A This is a loose card with a -- latent prints on it.

STATE'S WITNESS - DENNIS CHAPMAN - (DIRECT)

1 Q Where did you receive this latent print card?

2 A I received this from Detective Bourdon of Elkhart
3 City Police Department at the same time I received
4 the fingerprint card.

5 Q Were you asked to perform any specific examination
6 on these two things?

7 A Yes. I -- along with this, I received several
8 other fingerprint lifts and fingerprint cards. I
9 was asked to see if I could make a comparison from
10 those?

11 Q Okay. Thank you. And let me ask you. Were you
12 able to make a comparison from the fingerprint card
13 in state's -- what's identified as State's Exhibit
14 47 and what is entered into evidence as State's
15 Exhibit 46?

16 A Yes, I was.

17 MS. BECKER: Thank you. State would now move
18 to admit what's been marked for identification purposes
19 as State's Exhibit 47.

20 THE COURT: Mr. Crawford, any objection?

21 MR. CRAWFORD: No objection, your Honor.

22 THE COURT: Mr. Zook, any objection?

23 MR. ZOOK: No, sir.

24 THE COURT: Exhibit 47 will be admitted without
25 objection.

STATE'S WITNESS - DENNIS CHAPMAN - (DIRECT)

1 BY MS. BECKER:

2 Q Detective, I'm now showing you again State's
3 Exhibit 47. What is the name or the signature on
4 the top left of that card?

5 A Lana R. Canen.

6 Q Thank you.

7 MS. BECKER: State would move to publish
8 State's Exhibit 47 to the jury by passing?

9 THE COURT: Any objection.

10 MR. ZOOK: No, sir.

11 MR. CRAWFORD: No, objection, your Honor.

12 THE COURT: Exhibit 47 will be published in the
13 manner of choosing by the state.

14 (State's Exhibit 47 was published to
15 the jury.)

16 BY MS. BECKER:

17 Q Detective Chapman, let's talk a little bit about
18 how you made your comparison. First of all, did
19 you have to use something in order to examine
20 State's Exhibit 46, namely, lifter M, for the
21 purpose of even finding a print on here?

22 A Yes. I needed a magnifying glass to look at that.

23 Q What kind of a magnifying glass did you use?

24 A It's a little instrument. We've used the same type
25 at the FBI just a little black instrument with two

STATE'S WITNESS - DENNIS CHAPMAN - (DIRECT)

1 magnifying glasses in it. You can adjust it for
2 your eyes?

3 Q Okay. After you were able to locate the print on
4 lifter M, did you try and locate any others that
5 might have enough ridge detail or enough detail to
6 make some kind of a comparison as well?

7 A Yes. Initially that's what I did with all the
8 lifters. I checked those out see if there was any
9 prints on there that I could examine.

10 Q Did any of the other lifters or anywhere else on
11 lifter M have anything that had enough detail for
12 you to make a comparison?

13 A There was slight detail, but not enough to make a
14 comparison.

15 Q Now, after you were able to enlarge with your glass
16 and look at what was on lifter M the one print that
17 had enough detail, what did you do?

18 A I examined the cards I had. I examined first the
19 suspect cards.

20 Q Okay. Were you able to notice certain
21 characteristic about the print that was on lifter M
22 that you were looking for in the suspect card?

23 A Yes. I knew it was a loop. So I was looking for a
24 loop on the fingerprint cards themselves.

25 Q What's a loop?

STATE'S WITNESS - DENNIS CHAPMAN - (DIRECT)

1 A That would be where the ridges would all flow
2 through at one side, present a different pattern
3 whirls, loops, arches; and I was looking for a loop
4 specifically that I eliminated the ones on the card
5 that were not loops.

6 Q All right. What's a whirl?

7 A A whirl would be there would be two deltas which
8 doesn't mean much.

9 Q Try and explain it best as you can to us?

10 A Okay. A delta would be -- there would be two
11 doubles outside of a whirl where a loop is going to
12 have one delta, and it be the -- for a whirl would
13 be almost like little circles, like a lot of people
14 refer to them as swirls, which is termed as a
15 whirl. An arch would be they flow on one side and
16 smoothly out the other side.

17 Q Are there also characteristics such as stops and
18 starts of ridges that are unique for individuals?

19 A Ridges, yes they would be, yes.

20 Q In all your time examining fingerprints whether it
21 be for the FBI or through your career until
22 present, have there ever been any literature or
23 anything else that has found -- or that more than
24 one person has the same fingerprint?

25 A No.

STATE'S WITNESS - DENNIS CHAPMAN - (DIRECT)

1 Q So the rumor about people having unique prints, is
2 that true?

3 A Yes.

4 Q What about identical twins?

5 A They have different prints as well.

6 Q All right. So when you're looking for these
7 characteristics such as whirls or loops or deltas
8 or ridge detail, are you able to narrow down
9 quickly based upon finding a specific pattern?

10 A Yes.

11 Q Were you able to look at any of the these suspects
12 cards and find something that matched the pattern
13 you found in M?

14 A Yes. It was on fingerprint card of Lana's.

15 Q All right. I'm going to give you back State's
16 Exhibit 47, which is Lana Canen fingerprint card.
17 Which finger were you able to find the -- at least
18 the characteristics that were consistent with
19 lifter M from the medical tub?

20 A First fingerprint, that was her right index finger
21 cause that one had the same flow as a little bit
22 that was on the lift card, but that did not match
23 at all.

24 Q So after you got past it had the characteristics,
25 further investigation showed it wasn't the same.

STATE'S WITNESS - DENNIS CHAPMAN - (DIRECT)

1 A Right. So I knew it couldn't come from the right
2 hand because it was gonna' have to be an ulnar
3 loop, and the ulnar loop can only be from the left
4 hand.

5 Q Okay. What's an ulnar loop?

6 A Ulnar loop -- they would all flow towards the --
7 they would start in the upper hand and flow this
8 way for right a finger. For the left finger, they
9 flow the opposite way. And her right index finger
10 is a radial loop, which flows the opposite way.

11 Q Okay. So you've got an ulnar loop, and now you're
12 looking at the left card.

13 A Right.

14 Q What do you find on the left side?

15 A On the left thumb's a whirl, so that eliminates
16 that right away. The right index finger possibly
17 could be a whirl so it was eliminated as well and a
18 left ring was a whirl, possibly a loop. This is
19 done visually cause when we used to look at a card,
20 we didn't have the time to -- actually, we were on
21 a production. My last unit I was in I had to do 40
22 prints an hour so classify these real quick you try
23 to pick out a finger to go search by because you're
24 looking at the same pattern all fingerprints you're
25 looking at. But you have to find one that's a

STATE'S WITNESS - DENNIS CHAPMAN - (DIRECT)

1 little bit different than the others so you would
2 (unintelligible) then you would flip through the
3 different fingerprint cards and try to find that
4 one which matched. Then you would -- the last
5 thing you would do is use your magnifying glass to
6 verify it.

7 Q Were you able to use your magnifying glass and
8 verify any of the prints from Lana's left hand?

9 A Yes. The left little finger.

10 Q The left little finger.

11 A Yes.

12 Q Now, so if I give you fingerprint lifter M, which
13 is State's Exhibit 46, back and ask you where did
14 the fingerprint that was found on M come from based
15 upon your examination, what would you conclude?

16 A Well, I examined this previously. I know it's -- I
17 made this little cut that's in here right now.

18 Q Okay. And based upon the examination that you did
19 comparing M to Lana's fingerprint card, what did
20 find?

21 A That they match. So the same points on each of
22 those prints.

23 Q All right. After you made the actual comparison
24 finding that that print was Lana Canen's little
25 left finger, did you make any enlargements for